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The CEC has identified and applauds existing local efforts that provide better local services at lower costs, believing that they can serve as examples for others. These efforts include:

- Springfield Fire Department's light-duty vehicles
- Springfield providing a private drop-off location for resident yard waste
- Springfield Township's school supplies giveaway
- Village of Rochester auto-read water meters
- Networks established by regional Township Officials and Mayors/Village Presidents
- Local jurisdictions' efforts to respond to CEC requests for information
- Performance measurement efforts in the County Sheriff's department
- Township Road Commissioners sharing resources and equipment
- Riverton and Clear Lake Township offering assistance in Spaulding's park construction
- A public-private partnership program to expand social assistance sponsored by Clear Lake Township
- City and County joint contract for workers compensation administration
- Mobile Data Centers and public safety records system collaboration
- Springfield Area Transportation Study joint transportation planning efforts
- County and City efforts at fleet maintenance consolidation

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Positive Local Efforts Applauded by the Citizens' Efficiency Commission

Introduction

Since the Citizens' Efficiency Commission (CEC) has as its mission improving the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of local governments in Sangamon County, it has focused its recommendations on areas where inefficiencies exist and improvements can be made. This focus might lead the public to conclude that local political leaders and their administrators have not recognized the need for greater efficiency and effectiveness. The CEC has not found this to be the case and believes that the exemplary actions that many local governments have taken without the CEC's urging should be recognized.

We believe this to be important, because as it approaches the anniversary of its establishing resolution, the CEC has found that many residents are often unaware of the many useful and creative actions already being taken by local governments to improve efficiency and effectiveness. We have also found that when these positive efforts are recognized by the public, local governments are further encouraged to continuously review their operations and build upon their positive efforts.

In light of this, the CEC felt that it would be beneficial to provide examples of some of the actions that have already been taken by some of our local governments, and encourage local leaders to inform us of other actions they are taking or considering. This report does not provide a comprehensive examination of all the positive efforts that have been taken by local governments in the region that the CEC has observed to date, but does highlight some examples of successful efforts to reduce costs and provide better service.

In keeping with its research goals and philosophy, this CEC report organizes these efforts using the "Six C's of Citizens' Efficiency" identified in an April 2012 *CEC Information Brief*. The Six C's are Conservation, Communication, Cooperation, Coordination, Collaboration, and Consolidation. They will be explained further below.

As the reader will find in reviewing the examples we highlight, the Six C's represent groups of strategies that can be considered by municipalities wishing to find ways to reduce cost and improve service. The reader will also find that they represent a continuum of efforts ranging from the least difficult approach to implement (Conservation) to what might be considered the most difficult approach (Consolidation).

They also represent actions that can be implemented informally, as well as actions that may require structured, formal agreements between and among jurisdictions. This being the case, and as one might suspect, far more examples can be identified at the Conservation-Communication-Cooperation end of the scale than at the Coordination-Collaboration-Consolidation one.

Thinking in terms of a continuum of strategies is important, however, as it allows jurisdictions wishing to improve their operations to select from a range of options, conceivably moving through stages of service improvements and cost reduction. This approach allows a municipality to engage in a process of continuous improvement, moving from simple efforts that are easier to implement, to more complex ones over time. We believe that if our local governments adopt such an approach as a regular function of effective governance, generating economies, reducing costs and improving services will not be seen as unique events, but as a normal part of doing the public's business.

Examples of Improved Efficiency and Effectiveness through Conservation

Conservation efforts include approaches by local governments to reduce costs or inputs within a single entity or among individual members of the public, so as to conserve the resources a jurisdiction already has at its disposal. If existing resources are conserved, efficiencies are created so that additional revenues are not needed in the future, or so that existing resources can be made available to other areas of operation where they are most needed. Examples of such efforts include:

Purchase of light-duty emergency vehicles by the Springfield Fire Department. In spring of 2012, the Springfield Fire Department (SFD) issued a request for proposals to purchase light-duty emergency vehicles. These vehicles, which cost approximately \$100,000 as opposed to \$500,000 for a full-size fire truck, will create cost savings for emergency situations where full-sized vehicles are not necessary. Non-fire medical emergencies make up approximately 60% of SFD calls. Not only will these vehicles provide savings at the time of purchase as Springfield updates its 10-year-old trucks, they will also reduce fuel and maintenance costs for non-fire emergency runs.¹ Any adjustments to man power for this vehicle or any other must be negotiated in a collective bargaining contract. The CEC recognizes this effort, suggests that the SFD continue to further downsize vehicles as conditions allow in the future, and encourages other jurisdictions to consider whether such an approach might be used beyond the purchase of emergency vehicles.

City of Springfield yard waste collection. The City of Springfield provides annual spring yard waste collection for residents. In previous years, this task had been assigned to commercial waste haulers. As of 2012, the City has contracted with Evans Recycling to provide residents with a drop-off location. Citizens can conserve City resources by dropping off their own yard waste. Public Works Department crews will provide the remainder of pick-up, rather than contracting out for a commercial hauler. The City

¹Personal Communication from Springfield Fire Chief Ken Fustin (May 3, 2012); Nevel, Jason (June 5, 2012). Springfield aldermen OK \$4 million loan to upgrade vehicles. *The State Journal-Register*.

estimates that this arrangement will provide substantial cost savings.² The CEC encourages other jurisdictions and the public to consider how local services might be made less costly and more efficient by increasing the involvement of the public in the provision of the service itself.

Springfield Township school-supply back-pack program. In July 2012, Springfield Township initiated a program in which residents who met Federal Poverty Guidelines could receive a school supply-filled backpack for eligible students. The program utilized General Assistance (GA) funding, with Springfield Township's GA Office taking responsibility for administration and answering constituent eligibility questions.³ Because the program utilizes the existing structure for General Assistance administration, yet provides a service not mandated by state statute, it efficiently uses existing resources. Springfield Township's administrative costs for General Assistance are on the higher end of Sangamon County townships' costs because it receives substantially more applications than many townships. However, Springfield Township's unused fund balance is among the lowest of Sangamon County townships', suggesting that it expends the vast majority of its GA levy each year.⁴ Developing and advertising programs such as the back-pack give-away provides for conservation of local resources. The program gives Springfield Township opportunity to maximize the usefulness of its administrative expenditures, while also reducing costs for residents in need.

Village of Rochester auto-read radio water meters. The Village of Rochester has worked in recent years to upgrade its water meters to auto-read radio meters village-wide. By updating to the radio technology auto-read water meters, the Village now saves considerable time and money through reduced public works labor costs. Meter reading for Rochester traditionally took two employees approximately five days each month, but can now be achieved by one employee in half a day. There is also less risk of employee injury using auto-read meters, reducing worker compensation claims. Although the meters cost \$285 each to upgrade, the Village sees a return on its investment because of the considerable time and labor now available for village employees to work on other projects.⁵ The CEC encourages local governments to review the tasks to which personnel must be assigned, identifying areas where the use of new technologies might reduce labor costs or free existing staff for other assignments.

Examples of Improved Efficiency and Effectiveness through Communication

One of the problems that beset all types of organizations – including local governments – is the tendency to work in “silos”. *Communication* is intended to break down these silos and includes efforts to share knowledge and information among multiple entities.

Municipalities are asked to address problems and overcome difficulties, and we find that these problems and difficulties are often not unique to a single municipality but shared

² Stroisch, Deana (March 26, 2011). Springfield yard waste drop-off site announced. *The State Journal- Register*.

³ Springfield Township Press Release (July 26, 2012).

⁴ Citizens' Efficiency Commission for Sangamon County (June 13, 2012). *Recommendation: Increase Township Cooperation on General Assistance Administration*.

⁵ Personal communication from Wayne Beck, Public Works Superintendent, Village of Rochester (August 28, 2012).

by a number of them. When the leaders of municipalities meet, they often find that many of the problems they face have been effectively dealt with in another locality. Sharing solutions increases municipal efficiency and effectiveness, but this sharing most often does not occur outside of some formal structure that creates a forum for information exchange. Equally, local jurisdictions often find that a problem they face can better be addressed (or only addressed) by jurisdictions working together. In the presence of improved inter-jurisdictional communication, these problems can be surfaced and solutions found.

But communication between and among jurisdictions is not the only communication needed to improve local government efficiency. We have found numerous examples where data that could be used for improved management is either not collected, or where when it is collected, it is not used for performance improvement. Communication includes efforts to improve communications within governmental units so that data that could improve performance is shared so as to manage toward greater effectiveness and efficiency.

We believe that if communication between and among the jurisdictions in Sangamon County can be improved, and if municipalities and their agencies find ways to better communicate information so as to improve agency performance, additional approaches to achieving service effectiveness and cost efficiency will surface and be implemented. Examples of jurisdictions taking action to improve communication include:

Municipal leadership networks and information sharing. In response to the CEC's first formal recommendation to create Leaders' Peer Networks, the mayors and village presidents of Sangamon County have met once and scheduled an additional meeting for autumn of 2012 with the CEC's guidance. The Sangamon County Township Officials Association has also been reestablished in response to the CEC's work, and is working to make citizens more aware of township cooperation and interaction, as well as positive services being provided by township governments.⁶

Data sharing and survey response. Local jurisdictions have voluntarily and regularly responded to a series of requests for information put forth by the CEC in the course of its research. CEC surveys have addressed operations in every unit of government in Sangamon County, and many local governments have been highly cooperative in efforts to access information. This critical information provided to the CEC has been useful to the CEC as it studies local government operations.

Sangamon County Sheriff performance measurement and data collection. As noted above, one broad theme of the CEC's work has been the need for readily available performance measurement and data collection in nearly all local entities in Sangamon County. An example of where this is happening is the Sangamon County Sheriff's office. This office communicates monthly performance reports to its deputies, detailing time spent on-call, available and unavailable for calls, and in other capacities related to their duties. These reports, enabled by the existence of New World Systems records software, allow deputies and supervisors to better gauge their time use, availability, and

⁶ Undated letter to Sangamon County Township Officials' Association from Mr. Richard Treat, President, provided to the CEC June 13, 2012.

effectiveness in responding to law enforcement needs.⁷ The CEC is working to encourage the collection and communication of such performance metrics in all local entities.

Examples of Improved Efficiency and Effectiveness Through Cooperation

Cooperation involves jurisdictions associating for a mutual benefit. It includes multiple entities working together through similar processes and means, though they may be pursuing different ends. Exemplary efforts of this type include:

Township road commissioners equipment and maintenance sharing. Township road commissioners in Sangamon County informally cooperate with other entities to share road equipment and road maintenance personnel as needed. As an example, Williams Township and the Village of Williamsville issue a joint RFP for oil-and-chip road repairs for the village and township annually, because they have found it more cost-effective to bid this work out to a private entity. Chatham Township and the Village of Chatham provide another example of cooperative road maintenance projects. Chatham Township and Ball Township also share resources such as trucks, and work together to spread chip for local road projects.⁸

Village of Spaulding, Village of Riverton and Clear Lake Township's cooperation on Veteran's Memorial Park. During spring 2012, the Village of Spaulding desired to place a Veteran's Memorial Park within its village on land acquired at negligible cost from the State of Illinois. However, it did not have the resources to provide lighting at the park. The Village of Riverton and Clear Lake Township assisted Spaulding by providing electric linemen, trench digging equipment and labor, and wiring. Their willingness to assist at little to no cost allowed Spaulding to complete a project for which it would otherwise not have had resources.⁹

Examples of Improved Efficiency and Effectiveness through Coordination

As a strategy for improved efficiency and effectiveness, *Coordination* involves multiple entities working together to pursue the same mission or reach the same ends, using distinct means or processes. This may involve both formal and informal partnerships, which may also include both public and private-sector partners. Local efforts of this type include:

Clear Lake Township "Family Wishes" program. Since 2005, Clear Lake Township has engaged in a public-private partnership to run the "Family Wishes" Program for township residents in need. Clear Lake Township leveraged nearly \$10,000 in private funding in 2010 through the initiation of the program, pulling together resources from a number of private donors to accomplish a single purpose. The program provided opportunities for

⁷ Personal communication from Chris Wiedel, Network Administrator, Sangamon County Sheriff's Department (July 27, 2012).

⁸ Interview with Lee Miller, Williams Township Supervisor; Presentation to the CEC from Shane Workman, Chatham Township Road Commissioner and Tim Zahn, Sangamon County Engineer (May 7, 2012).

⁹ Personal Communication from Brian Cuffle, Spaulding Village President (May 31, 2012).

collaboration among schools, churches, and auxiliary entities to provide supplemental assistance at Christmas time for low-income families.¹⁰

City of Springfield and Sangamon County workers compensation joint contract. The City of Springfield and Sangamon County issued a joint RFP related to workers compensation case management in 2011. The resulting case management joint contract is projected to save the two entities on workers compensation costs, and reduce the County's previous contract by approximately \$220,000.¹¹ The CEC identified this effort as a model for other human resource-related efficiency efforts, and is currently working to build on this effort toward coordination. Other jurisdictions may benefit from sharing in agreements like the workers compensation administration contract. The CEC is also encouraging other entities to become involved in similar efforts related to health insurance and other public personnel expenditure containment measures.

Examples of Improved Efficiency and Effectiveness through Collaboration

Collaboration involves efforts in which multiple entities work toward the same ends using the same means, and do so by way of a formal agreement. These formal agreements take many forms, and most often establish new structures through which the effort will be managed. Exemplary efforts of this type include:

The E-911 system. In 2007, Sangamon County, E-911, and the City of Springfield collaboratively purchased and implemented the use of New World Systems public safety and law enforcement dispatch records software. The software provides the opportunity for county-wide standardization of public safety records, as well as mobile Field-Based Reporting. The system includes Mobile Data Centers (MDCs) in law enforcement vehicles, as well as the MSP common records database. Currently, deputies and supervisors of the Sangamon County Sheriff's Department, along with many outlying municipal law enforcement officers, utilize the field-based reporting capacity of the MDCs on the system, which is also integrated with dispatch, records, and corrections departments in the County. The Springfield Police Department is still working to develop mobile Field-Based Reporting capacity, based on its larger incident report volume. By collaborating to fund the shared system, the entities involved have provided opportunity for many efficiencies and benefits related to public safety in the county. For instance, MDCs allow deputies and officers to access NCIC criminal databases from the field, submit incident reports to supervisors electronically, and access other tools that result in increased officer safety. Furthermore, the integrated system provides efficiencies by automating and streamlining records retention and sharing across the majority of public safety entities in the county.

The Springfield Area Transportation Study. The Springfield Area Transportation Study, better known locally as SATS, is responsible for transportation planning in a metro area that includes the City of Springfield, some portions of unincorporated Sangamon County, as well as a number of other cities and villages in the planning area. This effort is truly a collaborative and multi-jurisdictional one, involving representatives of both the County

¹⁰ Personal communication from Lori Williams, Clear Lake Township Trustee and Christina Nation, Clear Lake Township Administrative Staff (May 10, 2012).

¹¹ Source: Stroisch, Deana (December 13, 2011). City, county jointly hire workers comp administrator. *The State Journal-Register*.

and Springfield, as well as the Village of Chatham, the Springfield Mass Transit District (SMTD), the Springfield Airport Authority, the Illinois Commerce Commission's Rail Safety Program, the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Transit Administration, the Illinois Department of Transportation's (IDOT) District 6, as well as IDOT's Office of Planning and Programming. Although SATS was formally established pursuant to federal law, it operates through joint agreement of the involved parties under bylaws, policies and procedures they adopted. The funding of SATS activities is a shared one, and by agreement the Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission (SSCRPC) serves to staff SATS and acts as its secretariat.

SATS provides for both increased efficiency and effectiveness by serving as the vehicle by which transportation planning and research projects can be undertaken collectively that would otherwise need to be done by each of the involved parties acting individually. In addition, thorough its collective consideration and prioritization of area transportation projects, it reduces inefficiencies that might arise from disjointed planning and implementation, helping to ensure that funds are used for transportation projects where the need is greatest or the cost-benefit highest.

Recently SATS has expanded on its role, serving as a mechanism by which regional problems can be addressed collaboratively. For example, recent requirements under federal law called for the installation of new high-visibility traffic signs on roadways in the region. Although this was being addressed individually by the County and City of Springfield, SATS and the SSCRPC were able to bring a number of the smaller communities together to apply jointly for federal funds to assist with the expense of sign identification and replacement, with the Village of Sherman acting as project proposer and fiscal agent for the entire group. SATS was recently informed that this application was successful, and that the requested funding was being awarded.

This effort, organized through SATS, is a good example of how collaborative efforts can create efficiencies and generate a positive outcome for all involved. The smaller municipalities did not have to commit their limited resources to develop and submit applications individually, and the possibility of a grant award was increased due to the number of jurisdictions involved.

Example of Improved Efficiency and Effectiveness through Consolidation

As the CEC began its work, the utility of governmental consolidations to achieve greater efficiencies and effectiveness was one of the strategies in mind. *Consolidation* involves the formal institutional combining or merging of two or more departments or governmental entities due to a similarity of mission, means or ends. The consolidation of government agencies is not unknown to the area. In past years there have been consolidations involving election administration (City of Springfield and Sangamon County), parks and recreation (City of Springfield and the Springfield Park District), and public health (City of Springfield and Sangamon County). There is both anecdotal and empirical evidence that such consolidations can not only be made to work, but can achieve cost efficiencies and service improvements.

These efforts need not be across jurisdictions, however. It is possible for jurisdictions to be more efficient and effective by consolidating their own units or activities. One example of efforts of this type include:

Consolidation of fleet maintenance operations by both the City of Springfield and by Sangamon County. In February, 2012, the City of Springfield began an effort to consolidate its four independently managed fleet maintenance operations into one organization. To begin, an outside consulting firm was engaged for an assessment of the city's fleet maintenance organizational structure and practices. As a result of the study, the decision was made to move forward with consolidating all fleet operations into a new division within the Office of Budget and Management, which will be administered by a new citywide fleet manager. The implementation timeline is expected to be 12 to 18 months, and once implemented, it is estimated that annual savings will be between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000 per year during the first five years (as the fleet is modernized and capital costs are amortized) and then exceed one million dollars per year thereafter.¹²

While the City reviewed its fleet management operations, Sangamon County was also in the process of consolidating its garages. During summer 2012, the County shifted the single mechanic dedicated to the Sheriff's Department to the new consolidated garage facility at the County's Highway Department. The County expects to see a savings of approximately \$70,000 annually based on this transition, without a decline in service for the Sheriff's office.¹³ Highway Department and Sheriff's Department vehicles are now maintained in the same location, and other departments have experienced cost savings as a result of utilizing this maintenance facility instead of a private garage for vehicle maintenance.¹⁴

Both of these efforts provide examples of savings that can be generated when jurisdictions thoughtfully review their operations to identify areas where a consolidation of services can yield a return on initial investment.

Conclusions

These examples indicate that positive efforts are occurring in Sangamon County, which can potentially be expanded or replicated in other jurisdictions. The entities involved in these efforts are of all sizes and types, and have worked both internally and externally to reduce costs or eliminate redundancies. The efforts detailed above represent attempts to communicate, use resources creatively, and maximize the potential of local government resources to provide better services at lower costs.

Throughout its tenure, the CEC hopes to continue acknowledging local governments and special districts engaged in positive efforts to reduce costs and improve services. By highlighting these efforts as best practices, the CEC hopes to not only inform the public, but to encourage additional, similar efforts.

The CEC is interested in learning of additional new or on-going actions by local units of government that exemplify any one of the "Six C's" so that these examples can be shared with municipal leaders throughout the county.

¹² Personal communication from Bill McCarty, Budget Director, City of Springfield (July 31, 2012).

¹³ Reynolds, John (June 5, 2012). Sangamon County sees savings from garage merger. *The State Journal-Register*.

¹⁴ Personal communication from Brian McFadden, Sangamon County Administrator (July 25, 2012).